

Faculty Conference Minutes
Recital Hall
September 15, 2000

I. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made, seconded, and approved to conduct business in the absence of a quorum. The minutes of the Faculty Conference of August 15, 2000, were approved after spelling and typographical corrections were noted.

II. Opening Remarks - Dr. Thomas Moore, Chair of Faculty Conference

Because the Board of Trustees has not met since the last Faculty Conference, Dr. Moore had nothing to report.

III. Report from the President - Dr. Anthony J. DiGiorgio

Most news has been communicated to the faculty in other settings. The process of conveying Winthrop's budget needs for next year to the Governor's office has started. All sources indicate that next year's new revenue will be between \$100 and \$150 million. Approximately \$400 million is needed to cover project rollovers from the current year. The projections may be the result of some political posturing in light of the upcoming elections. Regardless, there will be little new money available for Winthrop or any other state agency. Last year's bond bill, which includes \$2.5 million for new windows and a roof for the Rutledge Building, has been passed but has not yet been signed by the governor. As a result, the draw down of funds for the windows and roof will be delayed.

IV. Report from the V.P. for Academic Affairs - Dr. Melford Wilson

Dr. Wilson thanked the faculty for the class schedule changes made to accommodate the new incoming students. The bill for the TERI Plan affects individuals with 28 years or more of state service. Individuals approaching 28 years are also affected. The plan permits retirees to keep their jobs while escrowing their retirement benefits for up to 60 months. More information is expected from Columbia. At this time, the governor has not signed the bill. New Performance Funding benchmarks have been established to make achieving an "exceeds" rating more difficult. Winthrop is the only institution that has consistently received an "exceeds" rating.

V. Committee Reports

Academic Council - Dr. Will Thacker, Chair

Academic Council presented its recommendations related to two new general education courses and asked that they be considered as three separate motions. There were no objections.

The first motion was to field test two experimental courses, GNED 101X and GNED 102X in both Spring and Fall of 2001. The motion passed without discussion.

The second motion was to approve offering up to three sections of each course with 18 to 24 students in each section each semester. The courses target freshmen but will be open to sophomores and transfer students if space is available. Computer programming will be used to restrict enrollment during registration. Instructors will be selected from the two groups of faculty who developed the courses. Course effectiveness will be assessed. A job description is being developed for an existing faculty member who will coordinate the new courses and be responsible for assessing the courses. The faculty member will receive course release time for the position that exists only during the field-testing period. The motion passed.

The third motion was to approve the two courses to count in areas III, IV, V, or VI of the students' general education requirements. The courses may be used in area IV to fulfill explicit general education English or history requirements unless a major or college requires English or history courses. Students who take both experimental courses must count them in different areas of general education. At the beginning of the discussion on the last motion, Dr. Mickey Kennedy brought up the issue of curriculum items, such as the Council's third motion, being excluded from the agenda that was distributed prior to the Academic Council meeting at which it was acted on. Dr. Kennedy read the following statement on behalf of the History Department:

“The members of the history department are disturbed by the precedent established by Academic Council at its last meeting. Setting aside any discussions regarding the merits of the proposed changes to the General Education Program, or concerning the pilot courses

themselves, Academic Council crossed a very significant line when it presumed to determine what constitutes a history course without consulting the department. By allowing the pilot course to count as a history course in the general education distribution requirements without first seeking any input from the department, Academic Council encroached on a department's most fundamental responsibility, that of its curriculum. We would like to go on the record as being offended by and opposed to such action.

We are raising this objection for reasons of principle and not because of concern about the effects of the proposed pilot courses on enrollment in history, which we think will be negligible. Nor is the history department seeking special treatment. We believe that Academic Council should have consulted all of the departments potentially affected by the proposal to permit GNED 101X and GNED102X to count in areas III, IV, and V of general education requirements. We urge that in the future Academic Council seek appropriate advice needed to make such important decisions."

Several comments and a motion for a procedural amendment to the Academic Council's third recommendation followed the reading. The amendment states that Faculty Conference directs the Academic Council to circulate, in a timely fashion, copies of its agenda to department chairs so that the chairs can distribute them to members of their departments. Items pertaining to general education may not be added to the agenda without prior notification of departments that might be affected. The amendment was revised to remove the general education restriction and to make the amendment applicable to all courses. The revised amendment was seconded and passed without any discussion.

Discussion on the third motion led to several clarifications by Dr. Thacker, Academic Council members and faculty involved in developing the two courses. Comments and questions were made regarding the selected general education areas. Faculty members were concerned that the areas in which students may receive credit, areas III, IV, V, and VI, do not correspond with the content of the two courses. The areas for credit were selected to encourage students from as broad a population as possible to enroll in the courses. The developers also wanted the two courses packaged together. The two goals resulted in selecting areas III, IV, V, and VI because they are broader in nature than the skill areas of II and I. The courses could not be designated only as Area VI, the broadest area, because the area is already fully designated by some majors. Area VI classification would discourage several large parts of the student population from taking the courses. If the two experimental courses are later presented for permanent status, the areas must be reevaluated. The courses are not permitted to substitute for a class specifically designated by a major or degree program nor can they substitute for the constitutional requirement. If the two experimental courses are later presented for permanent status, the areas must be reevaluated.

A verbal vote was taken on the last motion. Dr. Moore declared that the motion was passed. A motion for a show of hands was offered and seconded. The motion was supported by 67 members and not supported by 23 members.

SACS Self Study - Dr. Sarah Stallings, Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences

A SACS accreditation team will be on campus from March 19 to March 22. A draft of the self-study report is available for faculty review. Faculty are asked to provide their input before the study is revised and submitted to SACS in December.

VI. Old Business

There was not any old business

VII. New Business

There was not any new business

VIII. Announcements

Margaret L. Williamson, Dean of Enrollment Management, announced that students would be registering for their spring classes in November using the Internet. A representative from the Registrar's office will be visiting the Colleges during the period from October 1st through October 20th.

Dr. Moore announced that the October 20th Faculty Conference would be moved to Withers so that the Registrar may present on-line registration to the Faculty.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:47pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele C. Henderson
Faculty Conference Secretary